



solitaire property management

Improving our response to your telephone calls – July 2010

In the past year we have come a long way in improving our efficiency in answering telephoned maintenance or accounts queries from Solitaire customers.

Having closed the old Barnet head office in November 2009, we were able to create a more responsive Customer Services team working to higher standards than had been the case in the past for our customers across the portfolio of the 32,000 properties we manage.

Solitaire Customer Services Performance

In the first 6 months of 2010 our Customer Services team have:

- Received 63,000 telephone calls
- Improved telephone response rates so that over 50% of the telephone calls we answered were within 2 minutes or less
- Reduced the percentage of 'Abandoned' calls (where a caller hangs up before having the call answered) from 52% at the beginning of the year to 12% last month
- Received over 21,000 emails

But we knew that we needed to further improve how we dealt with calls from customers dialling our Customer Services number 08450 345 790, particularly at peak times.

New Telephone Technology

We have been working hard to get your calls answered more efficiently and last month saw another phase in our investment in new telephony technology to improve performance.

In June we introduced two new telephone customer service options. Firstly we fully understood how annoying it was for someone to dial the customer services number and then have to wait some time before one of our Customer Coordinators could answer their call. That's why we have introduced a new 'Call Queuing' telephone system upgrade so that you will hear your position in the 'queue' should you be in position 5 or less. The system will update you every 30 seconds on your position, giving you a good idea of how long you might have to wait before we can answer your call.

Secondly if you have been kept waiting for six minutes, you can select to have a 'Queue Position' call-back. This means that you keep your position in the queue, but you can hang up after the call-back is confirmed. When your call gets to the top of the queue, the system automatically dials out for a Customer Coordinator to get in touch with you.

As the system beds down the call-back option will be available earlier than the initial six minute threshold. We hope that once you have experienced our new telephony system you will find it a real improvement in getting your maintenance or accounts queries answered quickly.

What we do when you contact us

Many customers have asked how we manage our response to their emails, letters and telephone calls.

Firstly each property has its own individual account. That's why our Customer Services team will ask you for this reference, your **Customer Account Reference number**, which is quoted on our service charge invoices and statement of accounts. All your communication with us will be saved against this number on our database.

When you call us

- We record the details of your telephone call whilst we are speaking to you on a 'call log' that is connected to your account. At a glance we can see how many times you have contacted us, what the call was about and what we have done to answer your enquiry or deal with the issue you have reported.
- Our busiest times are on Mondays and weekday lunchtimes. If you are able to contact us at other times during the week we will be able to take your call without asking for you to wait.

When you send a letter or Email to us

- All letters and emails are scanned onto our property management database and logged against your account. We are then able to allocate your letter or email to a member of the team to action and check to ensure that you receive a timely response.

Fast Payment Services

Our Automated Telephone Payment service, available 24 hours a day, is now used by over 35% of Solitaire customers to make their service charge payments. Simply call **08450 345 790**.

Alternatively customers can view their service charge account and to make secure online payments 24 hours a day, 7 days a week online through our website www.solitairepm.co.uk

To register simply click on the *Your Property Online* link on our website. In the first 6 months of this year payments made via the Solitaire website are already 84% higher than in the whole of 2009.

Contacting Us

Call the Solitaire Customer Services team on **08450 345 790** (lo-call) or you can email us on **customerservices@solitairepm.co.uk**

The 08450 number allows customers calling from BT landlines to have their call charged at a 'lo call' rate wherever they are in the country. Mobile and other providers' charges may vary. Solitaire Property Management do not earn income from the use of the 0845 number.

Yours sincerely

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OM Property Management & Solitaire Property Management